Vindiciæ Voti.

OR A

VINDICATION OF THE TRUE SENSE OF THE NATIONALL COVENANT, in a briefe and moderate *Answere* to the *Protestation Protested*: Discovering the unsoundnesse of that interpretation of the COVENANT, and the weaknesse of the grounds there suggested for *Separate* and *Independant Churches*.

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Christian Reader,

After I had sent up this exercise about the Protestation *to the Presse, there came into my hands a Pamphlet named* The Protestation Protested, or a Remonstrance shewing what is principally required of all those that have or doe take the Protestation: *Which Treatise so far as it doth concerne this title, seemed to me so irrationall, that I thought all understanding Christians would rather have smiled at the weakenesse, then have been any way moved with the Sophistry of it; But finding by experience that not onely many of the more intelligent Christians, but even some of reputation in an higher ranke, were much taken with it, and the effect of it, that some were scrupled, some attempted a tumultuous removing of things established by Law, under colour of this* Protestation, *I thought it*

 necessary

neceſſary, that unto this Treatiſe, preſſing the taking of the Covenant, and directing to do it underſtandingly, I ſhould annex a briefe Anſwere to the unſound interpretation of it by this nameleſſe Author, leſt thoſe that have, or may enter into it, by my meanes, be afterwards by this bad gloſſe, caſt upon either the incomparable burthen of a wounded conſcience, or unwarrantable and illegall Actions, which will hinder, not further, an holy, legall, and orderly Reformation.

AN

AN

ANSVVERE TO THE PROTESTATION PROTESTED.

THE very Title ſeemes to me a riddle, ſeeing nothing in the Treatiſe to anſwere it, this being not an avowing, but a gloſſing, or rather a gloſing of the *Proteſtation*, as will appeare by the ſequell: But leaſt we ſhould ſtumble at the threſhold, he hath hang'd out a light, adding, *Or a ſhort Remonſtrance, &c.*

ECCLES. 5, 45. Page 1.

When thou voweſt a vow unto GOD, *defer not to pay it &c.*

THe Author firſt laies us downe a text of Scripture, from conſideration of which, compared with this *Proteſtation*, he is made to tremble at the ſmall account

that many make of so solemne a vow, under which guilt by his exposition he concludes the most of the best *Ministers*, and people of this Kingdome, who have entred this *Protestation*; wherein thus far we willingly agree with him. A vow to GOD is a straight and sacred Band, that should not be entred into rashly, but with serious deliberation, *Eccles.* 5, 2. else in stead of an help, it may become a snare, and be so far from acceptation, that it prove an abomination, as in *Iephtaes* case, *Iudges* 11. 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 39. After a vow is taken, there ought to be as much tendernesse to observe it, as caution before we undertake it, else we shall but double our guilt, and increase GODS displeasure against us. What we vow is in it selfe good, and so caries with it an engagement to performance. Our Vow is second ingagement super-added to the first, if after it we be negligent, we breake more bonds, and so must needs be more guilty: Its not to be doubted but many enter this *Protestation* rather for company then conscience, and so will make too little account of keeping it, and need admonition to observe, as well as to enter this Covenant. But that this neglect should be so generall, as to include the generality of the Godly, as this Expositor doth make it, that I dare not assent unto, the *Psalmist* hath taught me more tendernesse, *Ps.* 73, 15. *If I will speake thus, behold I should offend against the generation of thy Children.* To condemne the godly was such a thing to this blessed *Psalmist*, that he would renownce sense, and reason, and set upon a serious review, rather then dash upon it: In whose steps had this Author troden, hee would not have been so rash, to have put the foole upon them: He might with lesse adoe then the *Psalmist* have freed himselfe from needlesse Horrour, and the godly from unjust censure. But now to the point.

He

He gives us the ground of his Cenſure. Pag. 2.

THe Proteſtation *is to maintain the Doctrine of the Church of* England, *ſo far as it is oppoſite to Popery, which they do not performe, ſo long as they retaine and maintain the impoſition of the* Liturgy, 2 *the* Diſcipline, 3 *the* Government, 4 *the* Ceremonies.

Anſ. In his very firſt Argumentation there is a moſt palpable fallacy, which is ſo obvious, that its wonder to me, that any man that would undertake to write a Booke in a matter of this conſequence, ſhould either not himſelfe ſee, or ſhould imagine that ſo many cleere eyes that it muſt needs touch, would not moſt eaſily diſcerne, and diſcover it; for the Argument muſt be framed thus.

He that hath ſolemnly vowed to maintain the Doctrine of the Church of England, *ſo far as it is oppoſite to Popery, muſt renownce all Popery, and particularly the impoſition of the Liturgy, &c. or elſe he breakes his vow, and is a foole &c. But the Miniſters and people have proteſted to maintain the Doctrine of the Church of* England, *ſo far as it is oppoſite to Popery. Therefore they muſt renownce all Popery, and particularly the impoſition of the Liturgy &c. or elſe they breake their vowes and are fooles, in whom GOD hath no pleaſure.*

Now what a manifeſt fallacy is here, *a dicto ſecundum quid ad dictum ſimpliciter*, from that which is ſpoken in ſome reſpect, to that which is ſpoken abſolutely; for the *Proteſtation* is not againſt Popery abſolutly; but as this Author expreſſeth it, ſo far forth, as it is againſt the Doctrine of the *Church* of *England*: what Popery then the Doctrine of the Church of *England* doth not condemne this *Proteſtation* doth not include, being onely to defend the Doctrine of the Church of *England* againſt Popery, and Popiſh Innovations. But then ſome will

demand is not the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, against all Popery. I answere, *ad hominem*. If the things here objected be Popery, then the Doctrine of the Church is not against all Popery, for these things so far as they may be termed Doctrinall, are yet according to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*; unlesse you will say that the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is contrary to the practise of the Church of *England*, whence then thus I Argue: Either the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is not against all Popery, or else the imposition of the *Liturgy*, *Ceremonies*, *Discipline*, *Government*, are not Popery; for the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is not against them. If the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is not against all Popery, he that vowes to maintaine that Doctrine against all Popery, vowes not against Popery absolutly, but only as it is against that Doctrine: and then this Authors inference from this vow against Popery, with this restraint, that we must therefore oppose all Popery absolutly, is a manifest inconsequence: on the other side, if the *Liturgy &c.* be not Popery, as they must not be, if the Doctrine of the Church of ENGLAND be compleate against it, then they are not abjured: So however it be, the Covenanter is free from breach and folly: And this I conceive is so cleare, that it needs no further confirmation: yet a little more to evince the absurdity of it, by other particulars in the *Protestation*, we protest to maintaine every person that maketh this *Protestation*, in whatsoever he shall do in the *lawfull* pursuance of it. If a man should thence inferre, that we must defend him whatsoever he shall doe in the pursuance of it, if hee shall move sedition or the like, were not this a violation of the sense of this Covenant? and is not the same, when we stretch the opposing of Popery so far as it is

opposite

oppoſite to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*; to be meant againſt all Popery whatſoever? though it be granted, it be maintained in the Church of *England*? His foundation then is moſt rotten, and what firmneſſe can be in the building?

But he makes the objection, *Page* 2. which he indeavors to anſwere aſwell as he can: The Objection is, that theſe things are eſtabliſhed by the Law, therefore we may not caſt them off till the Law be abrogated, and we proteſt againſt Popery, to caſt it out ſo far as lawfully we may.

Thus the Proteſtor, wherein he hath objected, what he hath not well anſwered, though all be don very rawly. For firſt he ſhould have framed the Argument thus, Thoſe things are eſtabliſhed by the Lawes of *England*, where the Doctrine of the Church of *England* is eſtabliſhed, and therefore according to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, theſe things cannot be interpreted to be Popery; and ſo not within the Verge of that *Proteſtation*, which is againſt Popery, as it is oppoſite to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*: which objection if he ever anſwere, *erit mihi magnus Apollo*. The Objection which he hath made, he ſtrengthens from the words of the *Proteſtation*, that we proteſt to caſt out things as far as lawfully we may, which clauſe doth not at all reſpect the matter proteſted againſt, but the meanes and manner of purſuance, that we ſhall not doe it in any tumultuous or ſeditious or illegall way, but by honeſt and lawful meanes. A thing needfull to be taken notice of by many reſpective Readers of this Booke, who while they learne of him that they muſt oppoſe the things mentioned, as parts of Popery, from themſelves infer, that it ought to be done in a violent way, without waiting for the direction of Authority, which in private perſons is

not to oppose lawfully, but illegally, and seditiously.

But now let us heare his Answer. First saith he, *All Lawes are to be interpreted according to their cleere intention and end.* Now the Law for reformation never intended to allow or set up Popery in the Church of *England.*

Ans. This rule for the interpretation of Laws, in the (*a*) sense he takes it, is a device of his owne, that hath neither authority nor reason, for the confirmation of it. Lawes are to be interpreted according to the minde of the Law-giver, which the Grammaticall sense of the words doth usually discover. Indeed in matters doubtfull, where the words are capable of a double sense, the intention of the Law may there cleere, what sense is most *Genuine*: but that the generall intention of the Law shall give a sense contrary to the letter of the Law, is without doubt, a groundlesse and dangerous fancy. Its true, the Law never intended to set up Popery, but the question is, whether it be destructive of all Popery. The Law can reach no further then the light of the Law-givers, who if they saw not all Popery, could not by their Lawes condemne all, nor did, if the things in Question be Popery. *Lex Currit cum praxi.* The generall practise especially of those that are regular discovers the mind of the Law, and the practise hath been to maintaine these things, therefore its not the meaning of the Law to condemne them, nor of this *Protestation* to abjure them.

(*a*) There is a twofold intention of Lawes, one generall arising from mens goodnesse, and that may be to remove whatsoever is evill, the other speciall arising from mens light, and that is to remove such particulars as are discovered to be evil the latter intention is the rule of interpreting Laws, not the former, and this Author speakes of the former.

Secondly he saith, *If humane Lawes be found to be contrary to Gods word, they are* invalid *and void* ipso facto.

Ans. This rightly understood is in part a truth, but here misapplied, we are subjected to all Terrene superiours by the Lord and under the Lord, when they then command any thing contrary to GOD, the Laws have

noe

noe binding power, becauſe by a ſuperiour Law we are bound to the contrary: But yet ſuch Lawes are not *Ipſo facto* void, or if void, yet they are void *in foro conſcientiæ*, in the Court of Heaven, not *in foro politico*, in Courts on Earth, though we are not bound to obey them, yet we are without reſiſtance to ſubmit to ſuch penalties, under the danger of Sedition, which were there noe Lawes, we were free from. Againe, this Theſis of his is miſapplied, for thence he infers. Thirdly, that having made this *Proteſtation*, we ought to have no communion with the aforeſaid particulars, notwithſtanding they be confirmed by Law, which inference is therfore faulty, becauſe the *Proteſtation* is onely againſt Popery as it is againſt the Doctrine of the Church, and that which is confirmed by our law, though it be Popery, yet it is not Popery oppoſite to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*. If the Lawes of the Land and the Doctrine of our Church, had their eſtabliſhment in different Courts, then that which is eſtabliſht by Law, might be againſt the Doctrine of the Church; but the Doctrine of the Church, and the Laws of the Lands, having both their eſtabliſhment in *Parliament*, what is confirmed by Law cannot be Popery againſt the Doctrine of the Church, and therefore this Authors arguing muſt needs be irrationall.

But now we are furniſhed with a ſecond Objection which we are to conſider of, and whether this Author hath with any better ſucceſſe taken of, then he hath the former, what ſaith hee, If the *Parliament* did not by Popery underſtand the *Liturgy*, *Ceremonies*, *Government* of our Church, and he gives good reaſon to conceive they did not, for then many of them would not have taken it. What ſhal we do then? that is his Quære, now heare his Anſwers. Firſt ſaith he; *we are ſure they intended it againſt*

gainst all Popery. To which I Answere; that its most cleare, and so he himselfe expresseth in the former Page, they only intend it against Popery, as it is opposite against the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, and such Popery the mentioned things cannot be. Secondly saith he, *They expresse, that the words are not to be extended to the maintaining of any forme of Worship, Discipline, or Ceremonies in the said Church*: What doth he thence inferre, why forsooth? that therefore we may not Protest for the maintenance of these; why, was that the Question whether we should be bound to maintaine them, or whether we are bound to abolish them? What ridiculous disputing then is this? But hence I Argue: If the *Protestation* do not include them for confirmation, because they are no parts of Doctrine; it doth not exclude them for abolition, but leaves them for determination to another opportunity. Thirdly saith he, *Suppose that at the first making of the* Protestation, *that these particulars were not mentioned in the Catalogue of Popery, yet no good Christian can or will deny, that the House of* Commons *did not at all intend to exclude what ever should pertaine to Popery as a branch thereof.* This Author is very good at bold assertions, but all as bad in confirmations, for what a good Christian may do in weakenesse, I will not determine; but no wise Christian, as far as I can conceive, can judge, that what ever shall be found to be Popery, is included in this *Protestation*, but what ever is found to be Popery against the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, which is the terme limiting Popery in the *Protestation*. Fourthly he Argues from the hopes that we have by this *Parliament*, of such a Reformation, as will not deserve the name of Reformation, if all Popery be not made to be packing. I joyne with him in all comfortable hopes from this Honourable House, but what is

his

this to his matter in hand? All the Reformation to be expected from this *Parliament*, is not expected by this *Protestation*, this is one degree to reforme whatever Popery or Innovation is against Law established, this done, the *Parliament* is proceeding further to perfect hoped for Reformation, by removing corruptions established by Law. Fiftly, Suppose saith he, *that it could be imagined by any reasonable man, that the House of* Commons *had no thought implicitely to include the foresaid things in the fardell of Popery: shall private and particular Christians knowing these to be Popery, and Antichristian, being bound by their solemne Vow and Protestation, never reforme themselves &c.* I Answere no man can; if (as he is rationall) he deale rationally. But suppose that these things were not included in the *Protestation* according to the intention of the House of *Commons*, which may appeare by unanswerable grounds.

1. Because the expresse words be against that Popery which is against the Doctrine of the Church of ENGLAND, which these things mentioned, established by Law in our Church cannot be.

Secondly, Since the generall taking, and first making of this *Protestation*, the Government and Discipline of the Church hath been in strong dispute whether it should continue or no, which had it been Protested against, there had been no place for dispute, which yet doth neither take off the friends of that side from asserting, nor is used by the opposites to Prelacy, to overbeare their Antagonists, which had been the easiest and speediest way of victory, if this Authors fancy had had truth in it.

Thirdly, Under favour, though (as I shall make it appeare) I am no friend to the foresaid things, yet it was not rationall that the *Parliament* should include

these things in their PROTESTATION; for these things being establisht by Law, and fixt in many of the members hearts aswell as Lawe, to desire men presently to abjure them, before a full debating of them, seemes a point of such rashnesse, yea Tyranny, as will not consist with the transcendent wisdom, and Iustice of that Honourable Court.

Fourthly, Nay further I conceive (under favour) that it would not have stood with the duty of that House to their Soveraigne (of which I know they are most tender) nor that respect that they owe to the Lawes of the Land, to protest against things established by Law, till the Law it selfe be abrogated, for none may Protest in such a case further then they are free: Subjects can challeng no more freedom then the Laws allow them, where and while Laws do tye them, they are in subjection; and therefore could not in point of duty Protest against such things, in such a manner, to which the Lawes binds them. The power of the House of *Commons* (where this *Protestation* was framed) is no doubt great, far beyond my apprehension, yet in this case I conceive their power over Laws is with the consent of the Lords, and his Majesty, to abolish them, but not Protest against them, while they are in force. By all which Arguments its manifest that the *Parliament* neither did really, nor could rationally, intend in the *Protestation* to Protest against these things established by Law, and if we suppose truly they intended it not, this Author doth suppose still falsely, that we are by our *Protestation* bound to reject and oppose them, for its an old sound rule, Oathes, and Protestations, are to be expounded according to the meaning of the framer and giver, not of the taker, else by a dishonest æquivocation any thing almost may be eluded; therefore what the *Protestation* meant

not

not, we in the taking are not tied to. And if this disputer should thinke this should bind us in the things mentioned, though the *Parliament* intended no such thing, but the contrary: He may as well affirme that we are bound to maintaine his impendant Churches, for whereas we Protest to maintaine the lawfull Rights and Liberties of the Subject, and every person that maketh this *Protestation*; he may infer, but independancy is in his judgment, a right and liberty of all Christians entring into this Covenant, therefore we are tyed to maintaine it: This inference hath lesse dissonancy from the letter of the Covenant, then that of his about the particulars questioned; yet though I beleeve hee hath as good a will to this as the former; he dare not be so bold as to draw such a conclusion, because though the letter may beare it, yet the judgment of the compilers makes it manifest, it was far from their meaning, which reason likewise might have kept him from including the particulars in hand.

But now lastly, he comes in with other quæries, *What then, shall men never reforme themselves, but live and die Communicants, &c.*

Ans. How doth this follow, may not men Reforme themselves in these things, unlesse they do it by vertue of this *Protestation*; did not all that held these unlawfull, before this *Protestation* was formed, in their owne practise withdraw from these things, so far as they held them unlawfull, and against the word of GOD, and so may and ought to do still, though they be not included in the *Protestation*? But to proceed, this Author next brings in his Schollers, questioning *how it may appeare, that the forementioned particulars are branches of* Popery. And he faines them, speaking, *that if their Consciences were convinced thereof by the word of GOD, then by their*

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Protestation, *as well as by* GODS *word, they were bound to renownce them:*

Ans. But by his leave he makes them speake what many will not, and none ought to speake. If these things be Popish, then by the word of GOD we ought to renownce them indeed, but by this *Protestation* we ought not, unlesse they be Popery opposite to the Doctrine of the Church of *England.* I my selfe must needs account these things, or the most of them of the same alloy with many things by the Doctrine and Lawes of our Church already condemn'd and abolisht, else I should not have been nor continued, as in part I doe, a sufferer for witnessing against them: And I doe as earnestly desire Reformation of them as of any thing; that little grace that I have, doth as much Act that way to wrastle with the Lord, for the rooting up of those plants which our heavenly Father hath not planted, as any way, but nothing ingaged by this Protestation, but only by that allegiance which I owe to *Christ* and his word. But some may say, If you be against those things, why doe you pleade for them?

Ans. Mistake not, I plead not for them, but to cleare the sense of the Protestation, that it may not be wrested to include them, as it is by this Author, of which wresting I see and feare manifest inconveniences.

First the Honourable Houses of *Parliament* are by it wronged, and are thereby like to grow more opposite to the removing of the things here pleaded against, and so (as it is usually) this making hast will hinder the work it aymes to further, unlesse this conceit be seasonably corrected.

Secondly, This misinterpretation will hinder many from entring this Protestation, which *remora* of so good a worke, had need be removed, which this Answere may further.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Many that have taken it, are partly troubled, becauſe ſuch things are yet ſuffered that they think they have Proteſted againſt; which they think they ſhould not only omit to Act, but alſo by all meanes oppoſe; partly I ſee men are taken off for praying for the abolition of ſuch things, as they conceive are already caſt off by Proteſtation, and are inclined by carnall violence under this pretence, to do that in the Church, which by a ſpirituall violence they ſhould indeavor to prevaile for with GOD, that ſo they may be prevailers with men, to have publique corruptions purged by publique authority, which is a ſafe, comfortable, and honorable way.

Laſtly, Some that think ſomthings in themſelves lawfull and tolerable, I find by this Proteſtation Proteſted, to conceive them unlawfull, as againſt the Proteſtation though in themſelves indifferent. As to inſtance, though they thinke and juſtly, That the uſe of the *Liturgy* in the whole forme of it, as a compleate ſervice of GOD to be many waies vitious, yet they think the uſe of ſome of the formes there, which are without exception, and moſt ſuited to the peoples wants, to be in themſelves lawfull. Notwithſtanding though not for his Arguments, to prove them Popiſh, yet for the expoſition of the Proteſtation they refuſe them, and not only refuſe them, but lay imputation on thoſe that uſe them, as breakers of their Vow and Proteſtation. Now as I have proved, no uſe of the Service-Book is againſt the Proteſtation, ſo nor the uſe of ſome prayers in ſuch a manner out of the Booke, can as I conceive, be juſtly termed Popiſh: for ſuppoſe that the forme we uſe be in the Maſſe-Book, why may we not aſwell ask the ſame Chriſtian Graces, that Papiſts and we both conceive to be neceſſary to a Chriſtian ſoule, as expreſſe the ſame

faith touching the *Trinity* or any other point wherein we agree in the same words, and that without the guilt or imputation of Popery? And againe, he that doth thus use the Booke, not according to the whole frame of it, but selecting what is most holy, nor according to the set words of it, but with liberty of correcting the expressions, which to our times seeme harsh, and unsutable, doth hereby as I conceive, avoid his second Argument, the imposition makes it not Popish to him, because he useth it with liberty of conscience; To this we may add further, There is I conceive a true and usefull distinction to be made of humane constitutions: some are helps, and so are *in genere boni*, good in their kind, the other have no ground, but meere imposition, and so are *in genere mali*, in their kind evill. Now formes of Prayer are humane helps, and so good in their kind: Prayer is an Ordinance of God, it requires a forme of words, especially in publique; all men are not able to conceive a forme, and therefore a composed forme to them is an helpe, and so good in its kind. Now for the Governors of the Church where there is need of a form, to tye to one forme which they conceive pure, of purpose to exclude others, which they conceive corrupt, is I conceive no usurpation upon *Christ*. And this was the end of our Godly reformers in appointing this Prayer Booke: Now though many men need not this helpe, and it may be can conceive better expressions, yet being that formes are human helps, and not in themselves evill: I conceive we may use some of the Prayers without sin, for though its often said, that we may not do evill that good may come thereon, yet I never heard it proved, that we may not sometime do a lesse good, and not the greater, for peace and order, and to enjoy the greater good at other times, more fully and freely?

The forme of words in Prayer is not the service, but *modus*, the manner of serving God in that Ordinance.

This

This giveth me satisfaction, and I beleeve many godly, and so prevents division from the Church Assemblies, which is desirable, for breaches if they be not necessary are justly scandalous. If any dissent from us, we shall be more ready to contend with GOD then them; with *God* (I say) that he would move the *Parliament* to remove this forme so excepted against, and corrupt in the generall composure of it, and what ever other they prescribe not exactly to tie the well guisted to it, but leave a liberty to vary as *God* shall enable them, as I have heard it hath been in our deare Sister Church of *Scotland*: Or if they tie them to any forme, that they will rather tie them to the matter, then the words, to prevent the broaching of errors in Prayers, which some thinke was the first occasion of set formes. There be Hæreticall Prayers as well as Sermons: A *Socinian* may vent his Hæresy against the person of *Christ*, or the grace of *Christ*. An *Anabaptist* may vent his Hæresy against the Magistrates of *Christ*, or Ordinances of *Christ*, in his Prayer as well as Preaching, therefore the Governors may justly tie them to set heads of Prayer, though they leave a liberty to the able, to use their own expressions; so Hæresy shalbe prevented, and no breach of liberty justly pretended: but this I refer to the wisdome of that Honorable Court.

Another Evill of this Treatise, which needed cure, it hath bred in some, and nourisht in others, an opinion, that our Churches are not Churches, nor our Ministers true Ministers, nor our Sacraments to be participated without sinne, whereby some are drawne to, and others confirmed in a neglect of the servants, and service of *God*, which is no small evill, that deserveth cure. Give me leave therefore a little to examine his grounds. His first assay against our Churches, is in the close of the

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proofe of his third point, the Discipline of our Church to be Antichristian, whence he concludes we want Discipline: and from the Book-prayer, and pell mell admission to the Sacrament, he affirmes in his judgment, we want true Sacraments, and that the Preaching of the word, be generally corrupted, then it wants a third marke of a *Visible Church*: for answere, I conceive a distinction suggested by the assertor of the Scotch Discipline to be very true, and here pertinent. *P.* 196. A *Visible Church* may be considered, either Metaphysically, or politically. It is one thing to consider men as living Creatures, indued with reason, another thing to consider them as Magistrates, Masters, Fathers, servants, *&c.* So it is one thing to consider a *Visible Church* in her essentialls, as a Society of men and women, separated from the blind world, by divine vocation, and professing together the Gospell of *Iesus Christ*, another thing to consider it as a compleate politicall body, in which the power of Spirituall government and jurisdiction is exercised, som governing, some governed. Now a Church that wants government, or hath one that is corrupt, may be a true Church in the former sense, though not in the latter, & being a tru Church in the former sense, her mẽbers may communicat together in these holy things, which fall under the power of order, which may be called *Sacra mystica*, as word, prayer, Sacraments, though not in such things as are under the power of jurisdiction.

For his objections about *Sacraments*, the first I hope hath received already sufficient answere.

For his second objection of *Pell mell admission to the Sacrament*, if he dispute against the Church of *England* in generall, he must consider what her Lawes are, not what the practise of some is: Its true, the Law enjoynes all to come, but its as true, that the same Law forbids

bids thoſe that are in contention, or are otherwiſe offenſive to the Congregation, to be admitted till ſatiſfaction given: So the command is generall, that men may not be let alone in prophanenes, and the admiſſion is reſtrained, that men may not be ſuffered to be prophaners.

And for his Third, *The Preaching of the word generally corrupted*, that ſhewes a mind to cavill, rather then any cauſe, ſeeing that corrupting of the *Word*, was againſt the Churches Lawes, by particular perſons, and all ſuch decrees againſt Laws are declared *invalid*: But in this he hath an *if* at the miniſtery which he further propoſeth in his Fourth particular in theſe words.

And to theſe Curates conſideration I refer it, whether they be able truely out of good premiſſes to conclude themſelves the Miniſters of Chriſt *lawfully called, when all of them doe immediatly derive their Miniſtry from the Antichriſtian Hierarchy, as the ſole foundation thereof*; and under the name of Curates, he comprehends all the Godly, and learned Paſtors in the Church, and dare he ſay, *that the ſole foundation of their Miniſtry is the Antichriſtian Hierarchy*? Are the precious guifts and graces that *Chriſt Jeſus* hath beſtowed upon them, and bleſſed and honoured with the converſion of many ſoules, no part of the foundation of their Miniſtry? Is the free choice of their people, deſiring them to take the overſight of them, no part of the foundation of their Calling? Will not theſe in ſome mens judgments, and it may be of this diſputers, ſerve the turne without any thing elſe? Have they any thing from the Biſhops, but as it were, an externall authoriſing, to exerciſe their guifts in a publique way amongſt their people? which if it be in ſom reſpects corrupt, ſhall this corrupt complement make void the call of *God*, & of the people? God forbid! undoubtedly *Chriſt* would never ſo ordinarily worke by them as he doth,

were they not his Ministers, but Antichrists: Besides I beleeve this disputer knowes, that by Law the Bishop ought to have divers grave Presbyters with him, and then the imposition of hands is by the Presbytery, as was *Timothies*, not of Episcopacy only.

But having answered his Objections Printed, its needfull I answere some others occasioned by him.

Object. Oh but say some, if these things be not included in the Protestation, *of what use then is the* Protestation.

Ans. Very great; Is it not a great matter to fulfill that great charge laid upon the Church of *Thyatira*, *Rev.* 14. *Hold fast that which thou hast*: *God* hath given this Church some light, whereby almost all the erroneous Doctrines, and superstitions of Popery are removed, which light by the audaciousnesse and corruption of some Innovators, hath beene greatly obscured, our Churches Doctrine in matter of *Justification*, *Free-will*, *Free Grace*; *Gods* eternall decrees, *&c.* hath beene almost utterly overthrowne: Altars, Images, &c. brought in, and the adversaries were as great as nought, and had proceeded far to worke disturbance in the present proceedings: whereupon it pleased *God* to move our wise and Religious *Parliament* (ever blessed be his name for it) to make this *Protestation* to maintaine the truths and purity by Law established, which was an excellent meanes to hold fast that they had, and prevent apostacy, give me leave to illustrate this by an homely comparison: When men are lifting up a thing of great weight, or Horses are drawing some great burthen up a steep hill, when either are at a stand, wisdome teacheth them to under-prop the burthen and stay it where it is, till breath is taken, or more help added to raise it to a desired pitch. So was it with our worthy Reformers, they were tugging to heave an heavy weight, and were at a

dead

dead lift; This *Protestation* to defend our Doctrine that is pure, was an underpropping, that things might not goe backwards, till they could add more strength to raise things higher, which *God* be blest, they are busily indeavoring, and if men will but waite, I hope they shall see the Reformation raised as high as the Doctrines of Scriptures, which ought to be the only rule, and I doubt not but is theirs. 21

Q. *But if they were in the* Protestation, *ought we not with violence to pull them downe, and so deale with all superstitious Pictures*, &c.

A. To the consideration of the matters Protested against, we must joyne the manner how we protest to oppose them, and that is lawfully. This *Protestation* gives men no leave to breake their Ranks, it puts not a sword of authority into every private mans hand, but every thing is to be don in a lawfull way, without breach of that order that God hath appointed in the world, or our Laws have ordered in our Land. To answere this then distinctly: Things Protested against, are either private things, or publique, as for instance, some Crucifixes, and other superstitious Pictures, are our owne, at our own full dispose, some are in publique places, and as it were of publique interest, things that are private in a private mans power, this *Protestation* doth bind him to a present Reformation of without further leave from any. But for things that are publique, private persons are to make their addresse to Magistracy, and intreat them to proceed, and then the private persons may follow as Assistants.

Againe, Some corruptions are in our owne persons, as our owne bowing to, or before the Altar: some are in others; that in our owne we are presently to Reforme, but if another continue corrupt practises, we

may admoniſh them, Proteſt againſt them, but not lay violent hands on them, but detect them to the Magiſtrate, who by his Proteſtation, will be bound to puniſh and Reforme them; thus *Gods* worke will be done in *Gods* way, with more beauty, ſafety, and certainty, and ſuteable to the mature ludgments of the wiſe Compilers of this uſefull Vow.

After he hath done thus with the *Proteſtation*, he proceedes to other objections, to overthrow all ſubordination in the particular Churches of a Nation, not only to one another, which was never dreamt of, but to any generall government by Officers gathered out of all, and ſo ſet over all, and ſo he laies a ground for independant Separate Churches, which he deſires may be erected in this Nation: but this taske of his is undertaken and performed with better order and ſtrength, by another Author in the *Presbyteriall Government Examined*. And yet that hath received a ſolid Anſwere by the Aſſertor of the *Scotch Government*, and that not only in the generall, by the grounds there layd downe: but by a particular view and anſwere to the Arguments of the examiner, and therefore thither I ſhal remit the Reader that wil take paines for ſatiſfaction in thoſe points. The full diſcuſſing of theſe things, is alſo beſides my purpoſe, who do only undertake the Anſwere of it, in reference to what is ſayd, touching the miſinterpretation of the *Covenants*, as impeaching the Doctrine that in the preceding Sermons I deſired to publiſh, yet becauſe I perceive many are much unſettled (and that even of thoſe to whom I have ſome relation) with the things that are ſcattered in this diſcourſe, I will indeavor briefly to run over the things here that are materiall, eſpecially ſuch as have not a full anſwere in the aboue-mentioned Treatiſe.

In

In this Authors Anſwers to his owne Quæry, what ſhall be ſubſtituted inſtead of *Prelacy*, *Liturgy*, and *Ceremonies*, many things deſerve examination. Firſt whereas he ſaith, conſidering the Church of *England* to be none other then a *National Church*, its uncapable of conſtitution. This word *Nationall Church*, I finde often uſed, and much put upon it, and yet neither is it a Scripture phraſe, nor do any give us a certaine expoſition of it, if by it they underſtand a Church that hath ſome common Nationall Worſhip, by ſome common Paſtor, at ſome common place, as all the *Jewes* had the ſame High Prieſt, and Temple, and all the Males were to meete thrice a yeare at the place which God ſhould chooſe; In which reſpect I conceive the Church of the *Iewes* was properly termed a Nationall Church; in this ſenſe Chriſtians have no Nationall Churches. But he ſeemes to make a National Church to be when an whole Nation is taken into a Viſible Church, or Churches, having all of them the outward profeſſion of Religion, which he ſaith, *is impoſſible now, becauſe particular Viſible Churches conſiſt of none but Viſible living members, and viſible Saints under Chriſt the King of Saints.* But here I would faine know the reaſon why it is neceſſary that the members in a particular Church, ſhould be of better mettall then the members of a Nationall Church: doth not God require by his precepts, as much of a Nationall Church, and ſay as much of them, as of a particular Church? See *Exodus* 19. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. how often is that Prieſt on the Nationall Church of the *Iewes*, *Be yee holy or Saints, for I am holy*: The very ſame charge that is preſt on Chriſtians, 1 *Pet.* 1. 14, 15, 16. where no more is required of the members of Chriſtian particular Churches, then of the members of the Iewiſh Nationall Church, and are not the members of the Iewiſh Nationall

nall Church called *holy or Saints*, aswell as be commanded to be so? How often is this reason given by the Lord, *for you are an holy people*: See *Deut.* 7. 6, & 14. 2, 21, & 26, 19. And many other glorious things are spoken of the *church of the Iewes. Ie.* 2, 5. *Ps.* 135, 4. *And was not Christ their King? Psa.* 44, 4. *If he were slayne from before the Foundation of the world, and the Redeemer of the Church under the Law, was he not their King too?* What difference then doth Scriptures make betweene the members of a Nationall and particular Church, and who dares distinguish where the Scripture doth not? If they Answere that the Nationall Church of the *Iewes* were holy in Profession, or are called *holy* in regard of some that were so indeed, the denomination being from the better part; will not, nay must not that answere serve us? were all the members of the Apostolicall Churches Visible Saints, otherwise then by profession? what those that were carnal in *Corinth*? Cap. 3. and defrauders and scandalous contenders too? C. 6. Those that were drunk whē they came to the Sacrament too? Those that denyed the Resurrection too? 1 *Cor.* 15, 12. and those that had not repented of their uncleanneſse, fornication, and Lasciviousneſse too? 2 *Cor.* 12, 21. And those that traduced the Apostle too. *Cap.* 11. Then what shall deny the visibility of a Saint, or a living member? So I might aske touching some in the Ancient holy Church of *Rome*, *Romans* 16, 17, 18. And the like of some in the Church of *Philippi*. *Cap.* 3. 18. 19. So likewise in the Church of *Sardis*, *Revel.* 3, 1, 4. and *Laodicea*. *Revel.* 3, 16, &c. Can these be sayd to consist of Saints, or holy people any more then the *Iewes*, must they not have the Title of Saints, in regard of their Profession? or the denomination from the better part? Can *Sardis* in any other respect have the name of a Golden Candlestick?

ſtick? And then I would know againe, for what reaſon it ſhould be more diſhonorable to *Chriſt* to be the head of a Congregation that are not all Viſible Saints, further then by profeſſion and outward conformity, then to be the head of a Nation, where all are not Viſible Saints, or why Chriſtians ſhould be in more danger, for being one by Profeſſion in a Congregationall body, then *Chriſt* and Prophets, for being one with ſuch as were not Viſible Saints in a Nationall body, theſe I confeſſe are Riddles to mee: Nay I conceive that though all that doe profeſſe holyneſſe and life ſhould in duty be ſo, yet *Chriſt* in the parable of the Tares and wheate, ſhowes it will not be ſo, and a generall ſeperation is not to be attempted till the end of the world, for the Tares ſignifie the workers of Iniquitie that grow & are to be gathered out of the Kingdome of him who is ſtiled the King of Saints; and out of what Kingdome but the Kingdome parabolized, *The Kingdome of Heaven. Math.* 13,24,41. and theſe Tares were not ſecret Hypocrits, for the Servants did diſcerne them, and tell the Maſter of them, and not the Maſter the Servants: nor doth it any way croſſe us that the field is interpreted the world, as though the wicked and Godly ſhould be in the world together, but in diſtinct ſocieties. For this cannot be? Why ſhould the Servants wonder to ſee the wicked in the world? how could the Tares come after the wheat, as they are ſaid to doe, ſeeing the wicked were in the world, before the Godly in the Church? ſee verſes 25, 27: *Why ſhould the Servants conſult about the wicked in the world? What have they to do with thoſe that are without?* yea if the wheate and the Tares be thus interpreted, there muſt by this parable be nothing but wheate in the Church, no Chaffe, no Judas, no hypocrite, for all but the tares are righteous, and ſhall ſhine as the Sun in the

Kingdome

Kingdome of the Father. verses 41. 43. *But why then is the Field interpreted to be the world?*

A. For good reasons, because the visible Church was not to be limited to *Judea*, but extended to the whole world that would entertaine it. Secondly, the word of this Kingdome, ver. 19. was to be Preached in the world, and by the word of this Kingdome, this Kingdome was to be gathered in the world, in which Kingdome should appeare the Tares with the Wheat. These things are so suitable to *Christs* words & scop, that I do not at al doubt but that this is the true exposition of this parable. Nor doth the Argument so confidently held out against it, any whit overthrow it: if you thus interpret the parable say some, you must of necessity exclude all Church Censures, and so crosse other plaine Scriptures.

A. There is no such necessity in it, neither, for its a rule in interpreting parables, we must not extend them beyond their scope, now we must know wicked men are of two rankes; one ordinary, that though they have no grace visible, yet they are formal Professors, not guilty of Crimes, others that are guilty of notorious crimes, as the incestuous person &c. Answerably there may be conceived a two fold separation: One generall of all the wicked, the other speciall of those that are scandalous. This Parable treates of a generall Separation of all the wicked from the godly, which is here denyed to belong to the State of the Church in this world not of the particular Separation of the evill scandalous by some crime which elsewhere is required to be done by Church censures. And in this Answere I am fully confirmed by this Argument, Church censures are an Ordinance that is to be used not only for the separating of Tares, but Wheate for a time, nay sometimes of Wheate, not Tares, for excommunication is for those that

that are ſcandalous, now a man may be in the judgment of charity, godly in regard of his eſtate in generall, and yet in ſome particular ſcandalous, and ſo need, and deſerve excommunication. And a man may be ſo meerly formall, that in the judgment of charity, hee cannot be deem'd godly, and yet he may be faire-conditioned, without crime, and without ſcandall, here the Tares will ſcape, and the Wheate undergoe Separation, and therefore ſith the Separation here inquired of, is of another nature, then that which is effected by Church cenſures, to exclude Church cenſures by it, is to rack it, and wreſt it, beyond its ſcope. I have ſtuck the longer in this, becauſe this is the *Cardo Controverſiæ*, the Hing on which the reſt is turned, now I proceed. He after makes great complaint of the State of our Church, to which I ſo far conſent, that I could wiſh with *Ieremy*, *my head waters, and mine eyes fountaines, to ſend forth rivers of teares, for the breakers of Gods Law.* But he takes up afterward, and tells us, *that like Sardis, we have a few names which have not defiled their garments*, and the way of reformation he preſcribes it by ſeparating theſe few names into a new Church, for which he cites 2 *Cor:* 6, 17.

But ſtay, is this *Chriſts* way? doth he ſo counſell the Church of *Sardis*? if ſo, I will yeeld: if not, is not this way of his humane preſumption exalted againſt the wiſdome of *Chriſt*? Now *Chriſts* Counſell is to repent of the evill, *hold faſt the good*, ver. 3. *to ſtrengthen the things that are ready to die*, ver 2. but not a word of ſeparating the few. How dare any then preſume to do it? I have often ſought, and long, a reſolution of this doubt, but could never yet finde it, but this Author thinkes he hath found a command 2 Cor. 6, 17. *Come out from among them, and be yee ſeparate.* A ſtrange thiug (ſaith he) *be yee ſeparate*; but a ſtrange proofe ſay I, That a command

to Christians, to come out from among Heathen Idolaters, and not to touch any sinfull thing should be thought to prove it the duty of Christians to be separate from formall prophane Christians, and not to touch any holy thing with them? what proportion is here for an inference? And for my part, I must confesse, I have wondred to see men so strict in this, that they will not joyne in holy duties with the Prophane, which yet I see make no scruple to joyne in following vaine fashions with them which was wont to be counted an uncleane thing: But this is further confirmed by a direction to *Ieremy*, Ier. 15, 20. *If thou take forth the precious from the vile*, but this is likewise as unfit a shaft for his Bow, for *Ieremy* lived in a Nationall Church, in which such a Separation as here this disputer strives for, he confesseth is not requisite, nor was it practised by *Isaiah* 8, 18. though he had occasion, or by any other. I marvaile then that this Author, or any other, should bring this place of *Ieremy*, to prove their Separation: There is a Doctrinall Separation which is required in every Minister, if he divide the word of truth aright, and that we are bound to as well as *Ieremy*, and the Godly Ministers do carefully performe: but for such a Separation as this Protestor requires, here can be no ground for, which they affirme was not required from the Church of the *Iewes*: But it is further affirmed, that after such an Apostacy as ours, Churches must be gathered anew, as when the Apostles planted Churches where the Gospell had not been Preacht, this is onely dictated without proofe, and yet is neither true nor probable, there being so wide a difference betweene our Nation now, and when *Ioseph* of *Arimathea* first planted the Gospell in it, when it was purely Paganish: besides, If this were requisite, then must *God* also give Ministers qualified to

gather

gather Churches,and not only to goe on in the ordinary worke of the Miniſtry: that is, Miniſters indued with extraordinary guifts having immediate callings, to Preach where they will, without the leave of men, with extraordinary aſſiſtance, without which ordinarily no liberty can be expected to gather Churches, till therefore I ſee the like guifts and callings, in ſome meaſure, I ſhall not beleeve the like worke or duty to lye on Miniſters now.

But ſome may aske what ſhall then be done?

A. Can we have better Counſell then was given to *Sardis*, by *Chriſt Ieſus* our bleſſed Lord and Prophet? and that is to repent of what hath beene amiſſe; publik humiliation, may fit publike tranſgreſſion, which the *Parliament* may be intreated to apply to this malady, and then not ſeparate from, but labour to ſtrengthen and rectifie that which is ready to die. The *Parliament* are about a great and good worke of removing erroneous and ſcandalous Miniſters, and ſeting up godly and learned lights every where, and withall, giving or confirming rather power to the godly Paſtors, to keepe off thoſe that are unfit for the Sacrament by groſſe ignorance, or ſcandalous life, by which meanes, Pariſhes that are already taught, may be quickly brought into for better order, and thoſe that are not, may by teaching be brought to ſome good meaſure of underſtanding, and deſire of the Sacrament, and ſome at leaſt outward Reformation before they be required or admitted to Communion in the Sacramẽt. But here we have another Quære what we ſhall doe, where prophane and ignorant perſons are permitted *Pell, Mell*, to which he Anſwers, *that if Gods Ordinance be Prophane (as they are) by ignorant and prophaned perſons coming to the Lords Table) then others alſo that Communicate with them, are guilty of the ſame prophanation.* What is this ſo without any excep-

tion? *prophane and ignorant persons* prophane the Word, and Prayer, and Fasting, and these are *Gods* Ordinances, cannot we performe this with them, but bee guilty? this is new doctrine. In the Church of *Sardis* to which he did compare us, were the few names guilty of that prophanation which the rest must needes doe? doe not the Scriptures shew the contrary? *Revel.* 3, 4. their Garments were undefiled, is there no other way to keep our selves free from pollution, but separation? what if we endeavor to remove the prophane? is not that a better course? and that which was the burthen still layd upon the godly? but never that in this case they should separate themselves, or if they cannot separate the wicked, but do their part, discovering them, & desiring their ejection, will not that free them from guilt? I thinke it will: and if not, I beleeve he must not long keepe in any of his new Churches. But the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 5, 6. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, so those that are corrupt will leaven all. A. That is, If they be accessory to the corruptions of others, not else: againe, how doth leaven leaven the lump, but by diffusing a reall quality into it? now there being two things in sinne, the guilt which is a relation, and in this case must come by imputation, and the staine or vitiousnesse which is a quality, and in this respect the corrupt will leaven only thus, when he is suffered and countenanced, he is apt to infect others with his ill qualities, from which they shall be safe enough that bewaile and distast his ill qualities, though they be at the Sacrament with him, yet if they can get assistance, one effect of their distast should be excommunication: But the Apostle applies it to mixt Communion, ver. 8 but he misapplies that Text whcih others more suitably interpret of leading our lives, not eating the Sacrament. And for that verse the 9. *not to company with fornicators*, its meant of familiarity, not of the

Thus this sentence must be expounded, Gal. 5, 9. in regard of infection with the same evils.

the Sacrament. For you may ſee by the two following verſes, ſuch an accompanying is there forbidden to a Brother which is allowed with an heathen, and therefore cannot be meant of Communion in the Sacrament. But I hope by the pietie of our *Parliament*, every godly Miniſter wilbe enabled to keepe off all that be guilty of ſuch crimes, if that will ſerve the turne, and remove that objection. The place *Epheſ.* 5, 5, 7. *Be not partakers with them*, is clearely meant in regard of their ſinnes, not the Sacrament, as appeares by the following verſe.

In Anſwering the next objection, he brings two places to prove that the holy thing of God ſhould not be prophaned, but againſt what adverſary? whoſoever taught ſo? but that the prophaning of them by one, ſhould prophane then to others, its denyed: his place *Iſa* 1, 15. will only prove that God rejected their ſervice, whoſe hands were full of blood, not the ſacrificers of the good, elſe how will he excuſe *Iſaiahs* Communion with that Church? or *Chriſt Ieſus* after him, when they were as bad? or where is his inference made or practiſed by the Prophets or *Chriſt* from this place, of neceſſity of ſeparation where the prophane be?

In anſwering his next quære, he tells us that to Communicate with evill doers is to partake of their evill deeds. This is affirmed, but not proved, nor doe I thinke it ever will, that my doing a good action well upon command of *God*, with one that doth the ſame good Action will make me guilty of his ſinne; ſure I am, then *Chriſt* and his Prophets, and Apoſtles, were all ſorely defiled. His proofe 2 *Theſ.* 3, 6. is quite miſapplied, for its ſpoken of withdrawing from him in regard of company and reſpect which is free and Arbitrary, not of the Sacrament, wherein they were not to withdraw from him, but if the quality of the offence did require it, were to put him away.

In his next Answere he affirmes that no Communion can be had in our Parish Assemblies possibly, without setting up new Churches: But I hope in this he is much deceived as in the rest. He compares us to *Sardis* formerly, yet I hope there Communion might be had without this medicine of new Churches. Nay let there be shown any example or any precept in the Scripture that in our case new Churches should be erected, and not the old repaired, and brought back to the rule from which they have swerved, and we will yeeld the cause: but if there be no such precept nor example, then in vaine are all such pleas as he useth, for things which *Christ* hath neither left precept nor patterne of. And when we see God hath heard the Prayers, and blest the Nation for the prayers of the godly in our Churches, as now they stand, and hath made us a people saved by the Lord, who is the shield of our helpe, and the sword of our excellency, more we shal not expect by his new Churches, unlesse he convince the necessity of them, by better evidence out of the word, which when he hath proved, we will never put him to trouble to answere inconveniences, but will with him buckle our selves to digest them; but we will not cast our selves, nor will the wisdom of the state suffer it to be cast on inconveniencies for good mens fansies without *Christs* command.

Nor wil we ever object it to be too strickt, pure or perfect, if the rule for it be convinced, but we will affirme that being its strayter then the counsell which *Christ* gave to *Sardis*, and different from it too, the pretence of purity and perfection is not to be hearkned to, for it is not such in truth, but shew, because it is not after *Christ*. *Col.* 2, 8. The like we say for envying at them, we will blame them that envy at them, if they discover the rule for what they doe, but till then we shall censure them

we hope by this *Parliament*. The Discipline of *Christ* wil be set up in every Congregation, and this will be a better or weaklier managed, as the Ministers and members are growne in *Christ*: if then any Christian be where great scandalls are, they may remove to other Congregations that have attained a better degree of Reformation, and this without any breach.

His next quære is what Nationall government shalbe set up by the *Parliament*, for which he heartily prayes, that *God* would direct them in so glorious a work, and blesseth *God* for such instruments, for such a worke I thanke him for his affection, but yet if his Doctrine of the independancy of Churches be sound, this prayer cannot be of faith, for a man cannot pray in faith that men should meddle with that which is not within their sphære or Calling, and sure if independancy be a liberty of *Christ*, all the *Parliament* hath to doe, is to assert this liberty, and what is more, is but usurpation. Then he tells us that the government of a Nationall Church hath no patterne in the word: the full answere of that I refer to the assertion of the government of the Church of *Scotland*, which I doubt not but will give good satisfaction to the indifferent Reader. Afterward he discovers (me thinkes) too much uncharitablenesse and selfe love. When he affirmes, let them have their liberty, and do for the rest what they will, tis indifferent to them, a litle more care of the soules of Christians might better suite with those that so far transcend others in outward reformation.

His last objection is inconveniency of independant Churches, if they erre as they may, they want meanes of reclayming, which is better set on by the Scotch Assertor, yet he hath said more, then he hath well answered, for having named all the meanes which their independancy is capable of, and being conscious it seemes that

they

they were too weake. He adds 2 other that quite destroy the independancy. As first that other Churches may excommunicate them, how are they independant, if under the Iurisdiction of other Churches? or how can they be excommunicated by those under whose Iurisdiction they are not? sure this is worse dependance then under the Presbytery, where a part is only subiected to the whole, but here a part is subiected to a part.

And this second is no better, for if they be under the Magistrate for any Hæresy, why not for all? those that are guilty will not confesse any of their Hæresies, for knowne Hæresies, but assert them for truth, and so chalenge exception for them, aswell as any, and if that be a known heresy, which is such to the judgment of the Magistrat, thē for all heresy they are to be subject to cēsure, & their indepēdācy is a nullity. Thus have I gon through this whole discourse without indeavouring to stifle, but rather sincerely to search out what is truth in every particular. It is my desire and prayer, that I might doe nothing against, but for the truth, rather would I desire that *God* should bring me forth to the severest sufferings for the truth, then leave me though in simplicity of heart, to oppose any the least trueth. What remaines but that while we that minde the same things, *Christs* honour in the salvation of his people, and right performance of his Ordinances, and differ only in the way, labour to keepe Vnity of heart, till we have unity of judgment, and let our Prayers be united at the Throne of Grace, though our persons be in different Societies, that God may perswade the wanderers into the Tents of those, to whom he hath vouchsafed the better light: That *God* may have the more honour, and we the more strength, & comfort by our free and scruple-lesse consociation: *Which mercy the Lord vouchsafe for Jesus Christ his sake, by the helpe of the Spirit of truth, leading into al truth, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.*

FINIS.

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